YUFOS

YORKSHIRE UFO SOCIETY

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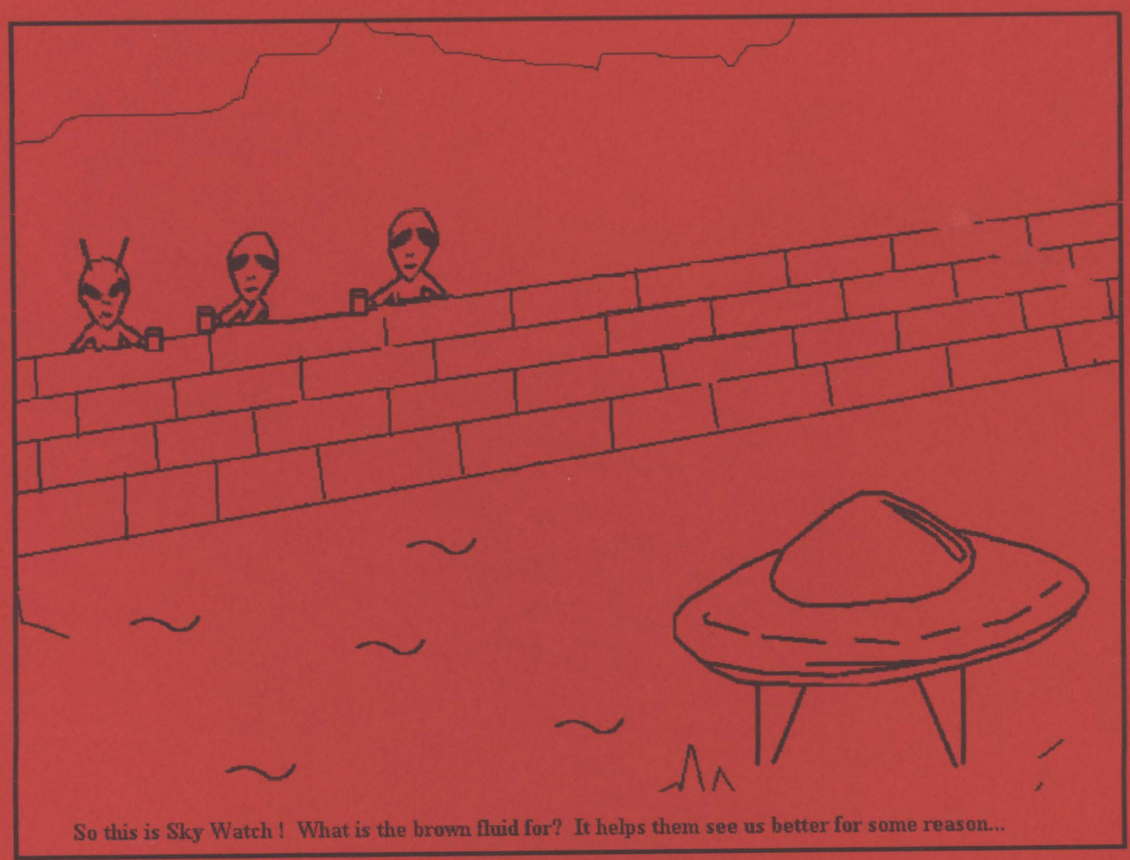

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AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL FULLER

JENNY RANDLES on the BBC's BRITAIN's UFO FILES

And much more...

£1:50

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Vol 4 # 1,July 2000)

YORKSHIRE UFO SOCIETY
224 BELLHOUSE ROAD
FIRTH PARK
SHEFFIELD
SOUTH YORKSHIRE
S5 6HT
Tel (0114) 2497270
e-mai: davbak@ic24.net
website www.yufos.ic24.net

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Project Red Book *is published each month by the Yorkshire UFO Society.*

Editor, Chairman & He-Who-Speaketh-The-Most *Dave Baker*

Web-master, Group-secretary and Chauffeur to the Editor, Chairman & He-Who-Speaketh-The-Most *Richard Moss*

They-Who-Printeth-The-Issues- *Ian Gregory and Jonathan Slater*

Cover Illustration- *Ian Gregory*

Treasurer- *Jacqui Baker*

Group Mascot- *Lil' Matthew*

Contributions: *Dave Baker, Bill Booker, Dr. David Clarke, Paul Fuller, Jenny Randles, Andy Roberts, Jonathan Slater, and some other guys.*

Research: *Bobbi Fleckman, Artie Fufkin, Marti DiBergi, Sir Denis Eton-Hogg, Ian Faith, and Eric "Stumpy Joe" Childs.*

To re-print articles in this magazine please enquire at the above address- that means me, Dave. I'm sure to say "yes", but it is nice to ask first...and remember to give us a reference now, y'hear?

The articles and views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, YUFOS members, *or*

"The question is...are we going to do 'Stonehenge' tomorrow night?" [redacted]

AN INTERVIEW WITH...PAUL FULLER

Paul Fuller was born on the 2nd October, 1960. He was educated at Ranelagh Grammar School, Bracknell, and obtained a 2i in Geography at Sheffield University in 1982, plus a postgraduate diploma in statistics from the University of Kent at Canterbury 1983. He was a statistician with Hampshire County Council Social Services Department from 1983-1997. How works as Research and Management Information Officer at Southampton City Council Social Services Directorate. Rabid Reading F.C. supporter. Paul was a member of the British UFO Research Association and has written numerous articles about UFOs and Crop Circles, and for a time produced the magazine *The Crop Watcher*. He also co-wrote the book *Crop Circles- a Mystery Solved* with Jenny Randles in 1993. He is now a member of the UFO Investigation Network.

DAVE BAKER: So, Paul, how did a statistician become involved in UFOs, Crop Circles and alien autopsies?

PAUL FULLER: It all happened when I was seven years old, back in 1967, around the time that police constables Waycott and Willey chased Venus across Dartmoor at 90 mph. The case made all the papers and had a huge impression on kids like me. A week or two later I saw my own UFO! I got up in the middle of the night to use the lavatory. Through the landing window I could see a white hazy light just above a line of trees about 100-150 yards away. It remained totally motionless, but I didn't - I dashed into the bathroom and wouldn't come out again! Eventually my parents realised something was wrong and came to rescue me. By then the light had gone. It subtended an angle two or three times the width of a full moon. It wasn't until I was 16 years old that I found out what my UFO was. It was only a noctilucent cloud, but this event changed my life.

I started reading every UFO book I could lay my hands on. One of the first books I ever read was Robert Chapman's *UFO - Flying Saucers Over Britain ?*. As this was the time of the Apollo moonshots I also read up as much as possible on space travel and astronomy. I was overwhelmed. Who in their right mind could possibly suggest that UFOs weren't alien spaceships engaged in a survey of planet Earth?

Can you remember your first case?

It was 1980 and I was at Sheffield University. My friend Richard Adams was also interested in UFOs and we'd spent many hours discussing famous cases. We had even tried to start a UFO society but got nowhere fast ! Then we got our big break. A local farmer had seen a landed UFO in her field. It was featured in the local newspapers. We set off as soon as we could, armed with cameras and tape measures. Of course there was nothing to be seen, but we had a good story to write up. The object was large, triangular and silvery. It was in the field for quite some time and allegedly left some traces. Unfortunately the farmer had to go out and when she returned it had gone. Its quite possible that the UFO was a balloon which was subsequently recovered. On the other hand the farmer had poor eyesight and we couldn't be certain that she had seen anything at all. There were a number of things we should have done, but we were just students playing at being detectives. I wrote the case up and it appeared in Probe's magazine as the Birdfield Farm case.

Who were your early heroes in the field, and do you still regard these people with the same respect or awe?

Hynek, John Keel, Arthur Shuttlewood. Possibly, probably not, definitely not !

Were you a fresh-faced and starry-eyes ETH-er, or a cynical, world-weary old skeptic when you started out?

Definitely a fresh-faced starry-eyed ETH-er. It wasn't until I read Keel's *Operation Trojan Horse* in 1976 that I realised that UFOs were just one small part of a fantastic procession of Fortean phenomena. I hadn't understood that people had been seeing and interacting with balls of light and non-human entities for centuries. Until Keel demonstrated this to me I

thought we were dealing with a post World War II phenomenon with just an occasional pre war sighting. I had not known of the 1897 wave of phantom airships and the subsequent ghost flier sightings. These just didn't fit in with my understanding of how an alien race would communicate with us. Keel's work introduced me to whole new ways of thinking about the phenomenon and it encouraged me to read more widely. I soon realised how silly the ETH was and how more fundamental concepts would be required to account for the evidence.

I know that you spent some of your educational years at Sheffield University...how much time did you spend researching UFOs in the town?

Not very much, I was too busy studying ! There were a few sightings that took our interest but most were very low grade sightings, just a few lights in the sky. I was too busy reading Allan Hendry's *UFO Handbook* or Paul Devereux's books. I did go to BUFORA's 1981 Conference in Edinburgh. Steuart Campbell presented his controversial explanation for the Livingstone CEII and we even got to meet Bob Taylor and visit the site of his encounter !

Tell us about some of your early cases.

I joined BUFORA in 1980 and Jenny invited me along to a Council meeting in London. I joined the National Investigations Committee almost immediately. My earliest cases were very instructive. BUFORA received a film showing a ball of light flying rapidly across the sea. It was submitted anonymously and someone thought it might have been shot from Portsmouth looking over towards the Isle of Wight. I visited Portsmouth and discovered that on the date on the film spool there had been an air show involving the Red Arrows over the island. I took photos to prove that the sea forts shown in the film were those off Spithead.

Another early case involved a lone sighting of a classic saucer-shaped object rising up from the sea over a lone witness near Ventnor on the Isle of Wight. The location was very close to two radar stations. My enquiry to the local police revealed that the Navy had been testing a helicopter off the coast at the time. Portsmouth Dockyard refused to confirm this so I drew obvious conclusions. The case was written up as explained in the *Sunday Express.*

I also investigated a case of mini BL in Winchester (reported as a UFO, but clearly meteorological).

Unfortunately crop circles then took over and I stopped researching UFOs for over a decade.

Was there a pivotal point or case which changed your outlook on ufology?

At this time, no. My increasing skepticism has been a long slow development mostly born out of dealing with UFOlogists than dealing with witnesses and cases.

When did you become interested in Crop Circles?

This was due to Jenny Randles' encouragement. In 1985 Pat Delgado held an "Open Meeting" to discuss the "mystery circles" (as they were then known) and on behalf of the N.I.C. I went along and made notes. Despite recent claims by the sceptics that no crop circle researchers believed that crop circles might be hoaxes I was the only person at this meeting who said that crop circles might be man-made. This fact is recorded in *Flying Saucer Review* (though I am not named) and I have this meeting on tape !

BUFORA's N.I.C. was well aware that some crop circles were man-made and we were concerned that each summer UFOlogy's name was being blackened as more and more people made crop circles. We were also angry at the way in which the *New Scientist* had accused us of fanning the flames of a silly season story even though we had worked with scientists (e.g. at Bristol Univeristy via the PROBE group) in an attempt to find an explanation.

We produced a report "*Mystery of the Circles*" (BUFORA 1986) which summarised our thinking on the subject, namely that some circles were man-made but that others might be meteorological. We circulated this to the press (free of charge!) and gained some good publicity for UFOlogy. We even held an open meeting which was attended by FSR's supporters. The evidence was freely debated

and all sides had their say. Unfortunately what we had to say was not what people wanted to hear, and the "debate" thereafter became increasingly acerbic.

You wrote the book *Crop Circles- a Mystery Solved* with Jenny Randles in 1993. We're in the new millennium now, but every summer the 'mystery' rears it's head again. *Is* the mystery solved?

I'm afraid so. If only it weren't. There's no doubt that Doug and Dave did make numerous crop circles which "experts" (myself included) promoted as genuine (i.e. not man-made). I assumed that previous researchers had exhaustively tested ways of making crop circles. There had been 5 years of research into the phenomenon before I arrived on the scene in 1985. The known hoaxes had been relatively poor attempts and the handful of researchers who had seen them told me that these hoaxes were nothing like the "real" phenomenon. I did have doubts about this conclusion and along with Jenny we appealed to the UFO community to help us make circles to test different methods. Naturally no one offered to help. Instead most of UFOlogy immediately jumped on FSR's bandwagon, with somewhat obvious results.

Is there *anything* still unexplained about the phenomenon?

In my opinion, no. I believe that reasonable people, if presented with the FACTS about crop circles and the people who research them, would quickly come to the conclusion (as proposed in the Arthur C. Clarke documentary on crop circles) that most modern-day circles are fakes but that they were based on a rare poorly understood meteorological phenomenon.

What do you think of some of the videos we have seen on TV documentaries, such as balls of light 'creating' circles? The two that come to mind are the Von Durkheim film, in which a 'white sphere' flies over a farmer driving a tractor, and the more recent Oliver Castle film in which <ahem> a number of balls of light create a complex pattern...

John MacNish explains the Von Durkheim film as an illuminated seed caught in the wind. The tractor driver was taken by surprise and thought he was seeing a little disk !

The Olivers Castle film was shot on July 22nd, 1997. Despite originally promoting it as genuine even Colin Andrews has tried to expose the case as a hoax ! In my opinion Lee Winterson has done an excellent job of exposing the people who made this film. He points the finger of suspicion at someone called John Wabe at the First Cut production studios in Bristol. Lee has a taped confession from Wabe that he was behind the hoax.

Bitching and back-biting and litigation seem to be part and parcel of ufology, but it creeps into the world of crop circles too. Can you talk about your own problems with *FSR*'s Gordon Creighton, as well as Circle researcher Pat Delgado and company?

I think the proper thing to do here is to point to the published record and let your readers decide for themselves what the rights and wrongs of this affair are. They should read FSR, Vol XX, No XX and Jim Schnabel's *Round in Circles* (Hamish Hamilton 1993). I have publicly withdrawn the apologies I provided.

What do you think was happening in the film in which researcher Colin Andrews and friends are apparently harassed by a military helicopter?

I published two extensive articles on this case in my (former) magazine *The Crop Watcher*. Its impressive footage and I almost felt sorry for Andrews and his friends as their van was buffeted by the down draft from the Lynx and Gazelle helicopters. However, Peter Williams has done a superb job explaining how the two helicopters were not in the least bit worried about Andrews and his friends and that it was a case of Andrews stumbling across two helicopters engaged in a game of cat-and-mouse with each other rather than a case of two helicopters trying to frighten Andrews away.

The film also shows what appears to be a small ball of light apparently

under scrutiny by one of the helicopters...

The so-called ball of light in this case is very faint and even Erik Beckjord has to explain to Colin Andrews that it may be reflections of light off some plastic bottles tied to a fence that he discovered. It may simply be a reflection of the anti collision light on the base of the helicopter.

How can you tell a 'real' (meteorological) circle from a 'fake' or man-made one?

Unfortunately "real" circles are fakes. However, I do hold out some support for naturally-created crop circles. In January *Nature* republished a letter they first published in July 1880 by an amateur scientist called John Rand Capron. The letter described how Rand Capron had been called to inspect a field close to his home in Guildford on 21st July 1880. He found

"... a field of standing wheat considerably knocked about, not as an entirety, but in patches forming, as viewed from a distance, circular spots. Examined more closely, these all presented much the same character, viz., a few standing stalks as a centre, some prostate stalks with their heads arranged pretty evenly in a direction forming a circle round the centre, and outside these a circular wall of stalks which had not suffered..."

Unfortunately *Nature* did not publish the drawing Rand Capron submitted with his letter so we do not know what these "circles" looked like. However, am hoping that this letter has survived and that it will show a sharp-edged circle, perhaps surrounded by less well-defined circles. This would be comparable to the field of circles and swathes investigated by meteorologist David Reynolds at Kings Bromley in 1991. It also fits in with the numerous historical cases that we have been sent by members of the farming community who insist that they saw or knew about whirlwinds making (small simple) crop circles dating back to the turn of the century.

Many circle researchers usually show a slide of the 'Mowing Devil' woodcut from in their lectures. PRB published an article by Rob Irving in which he claimed that the story was probably more of a moral folk-tale than a description of paranormal activity. Do you agree?

Bob Rickard at Fortean Times thinks much the same. My comment would be that it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from folk-tales like the "Mowing Devil" of 1676. Nevertheless the case does sound like a description of a meteorological event which left ground traces. I think it will be difficult for anyone to decide for certain what this case represents.

Some people will no doubt find it hard to believe that even a large number of people could create such beautiful and complex patterns as the Scorpion,or the Juliette spiral in the middle of the night in only a couple of hours...

I've been out of the crop circle subject for a few years and have not personally investigated these cases. However, there are large numbers of people who are highly skilled at making large complex crop formations at night. The Scorpions were allegedly created by circlemaker Robert Irving and some of his colleagues (see www.circlemakers.org.uk). I have been told that the story of the Juliette spiral being made in "2 hours" (actually it was a lot less than this) was highly dubious. The believers usually claim that the circlemakers are lying about having made specific formations whilst the circle-makers don't really care very much what the believers are saying. Nevertheless all the well known crop circle researchers have provably promoted man-made circles as non man-made, so there is overwhelming evidence that the circlemakers are telling the truth. Why else would most of the original circle researchers have dropped out of the subject altogether ?

It is interesting though that these pictograms have only appeared since the 80s. Could this be, as some claim, that Gaia or Mother Earth is screaming for us to look after our world more, or that students are just cleverer?

That's a slightly contentious statement. Whilst so-called "pictograms" have only been appearing since 1989 there are complex patterns of ground traces in the historical record. These were mainly reported from North America and were investigated by researchers like Chris Rutkowski of the UFO

Research Manitoba Group. However, none of these historic cases (dating back to the 1950s) involved obvious pictures (i.e. alleged messages). The "evolving" of the formations was a key issue which we had problems explaining. It wasn't until Doug and Dave came forward that our suspicions were proved - the hoaxers were trying to discredit Terence Meaden's atmospheric vortex theory by making more and more complicated formations. I don't believe in Gaia or Mother Earth, although I share people's concerns about the damage to our environment.

When Tim Matthews spoke for YUFOS last year, he suggested that the Wiltshire tourist board actually pay Circle Makers to do their thing, so great is the potential revenue...is there any truth in this?

I don't know the truth about this claim, but I recently came across a tourist leaflet for Warminster which plugged the UFO angle despite the fact that most of the UFO sightings from Warminster in the 1960s were explained away years ago. I will investigate further.

It seems that crop circles have become as mired in their own mythology and misconception as UFOs have. Let's look at some of these...

Doug n' Dave did most of them...

Unfortunately true for the Cheesefoot Head and south Wiltshire circles up to 1992. Copy cat hoaxers account for most of the remainder. I published a map showing all known crop circle hoaxers in 1991 - there were at least 20 such groups in the UK and several cases overseas. There must be many dozens more by now.

The crops within circles are sometimes changed at a mollecular level?

This is a claim first introduced into the public arena by Andrews and Delgado. Their claim upset sections of the farming community who saw this as scaremongering. A&D later repeated the claim by promoting Spagyryk analysis and the HSC Laboratories near Stroud. The proprieters of this laboratory were later successfully prosecuted in the courts for peddling their dubious work. Dr Levengood's later research is fundamentally flawed for numerous reasons, e.g. his failure to use double blind experiments, biased sampling methods and his failure to take account of hoaxing. On one occasion he even decided to treat a sample from outside a crop circle as if it had been taken inside the crop circle. This helped to demolish the statistical basis of his work.

Some circles are made by helicopters hovering upside down, or by mating hedghogs...

Yes, I think I've heard about these explanations...

As well as Circles and UFOs, you were heavily involved in another controversial issue...Ray Santilli's 'Alien Autopsy' film...what was your involvement?

At the time I was visiting the CompuServe Encounters newsgroup which was discussing the film. It was very exciting ! I also knew most of the key players involved in the promotion of the film (i.e.Philip Mantle, Colin Andrews and later Michael Hesseman). The newsgroup was joined by both Ray Santilli and Bob Shell (the editor of *Shutterbug* magazine who "authenticated" the film). James Easton was already ripping the case to shreds on this newsgroup and I offered to help out. It was very easy saving the contradictory messages and writing to places like the Royal Society to prove that the claims being made were just hocum. We tried to trap Ray Santilli on a number of occasions but he was a wily character who had a number of believer UFOlogists surrounding him who took the flack and protected him no matter how much his claims were knocked down.

No one anywhere in the world ever had a piece of the original film where the alien is depicted and was able to conduct a chemical date test. Of course the fact that this was not allowed to happen proves that the film was not genuine.

There are some who claim that the film does not feature an alien, but that it

does show a real autopsy on a diseased or mutated human being...what do you think of this as a possibility?

I did use to think that the probability of the film showing a deceased human being was quite high, but there have been several recent science fiction films with very realistic alien autopsies shown. I'm 100 % convinced its a sci-fi prop. If a real human being had had the characteristics seen in the film I feel certain that the medical community would know of the case.

Was it just a greedy money-making excercise, a 'joke' that got out of hand, or as some of the more conspiratorial claim, an attempt to discredit ufologists for some sinister purpose?

It was just an attempt to make money. Allegedly an awful lot of money. Why would someone need to "discredit" UFOlogists for some "sinister purpose" ? In my opinion most UFOlogists discredit themselves and their subject on an almost continuous basis.

There was something of an expose on the US programme *The World's Greatest Hoaxes Finally Revealed*. Did the programme have it right?

I think I have seen this programme, but I know that the people who made the so-called "Tent Footage" were exposed by "*The Mail on Sunday*" on January 17th 1999. Like many non-UFOlogists, they think UFOlogy is absolutely hilarious and took great delight in winding up the UFO believers.

I must admit that from seeing the first 'still' photo of the so-called 'alien' in the press, let alone watching the film, I was never in the slightest bit taken in. Why do you think it had a hold on so many otherwise sensible people, and more worrying, still does?

This just demonstrates the power of the UFO myth. People want to believe and they suspend their normal sense just long enough to begin believing. Then they find it difficult to start thinking straight again. Shame on those UFOlogists who let a good story or their need for self promotion get in the way of the truth.

Where does the case lie now, if there is anything left?

After the expose of the makers of the "Tent Footage" and Ray Santilli's involvement in this escapade there's not much left except to find out who made the film and what their techniques were. I'm not aware that anyone has made much progress on this latter issue.

Finally, I know that you have just returned from a few days researching at the Public Records Office in Kew Gardens, along with fellow UFOIN members Dave Clarke & Andy Roberts. What sort of things were you looking for, and what did you find?

Lots of stuff on the 1967 wave, the 1963 Charlton Crater case, D-Notices, the 1956 Wilbur Wright case, the 1967 Carl Farlow case. What I found will remain a national secret for many years to come !

Thanks Paul for an original and highly informative interview. Now, where's my plank, length of rope and funny bit of bent wire...*dave baker*

COMING SOON...

AN INTERVIEW WITH...

"UFO MAGAZINE'S"

GRAHAM BIRDSALL

BEHIND 'BRITAIN'S SECRET UFO FILES'

By Jenny Randles

By the time this issue of Project Red Book reaches your hands, the BBC satellite & cable channel UK Horizons will have repeated Jenny Randles' UFO documentary - *Britains Secret UFO Files* –on 3 July, at 11:30pm. It was first screened 4 years ago but obviously some people might see the programme again or indeed, for the first time. In fact, we showed a segment of the show at a recent YUFOS meeting after our free-style discussion had drifted around to the infamous Templeton photograph, or as it is more commonly known – to Jenny's chagrin I might add- 'The Cumberland Spaceman'.

With the programme in the public eye once more, Jenny Randles took the time to look back on the making of the programme, and an interesting, if not unexpected aftermath...Dave Baker

This 27 minute programme was originally made for a BBC series called *'Secrets of the Paranormal'* in 1995/6 (other episodes of the series were films made by Uri Geller and Maurice Grosse amongst others - these are also being screened on UK Horizons at the same time of night on next Tuesday through Friday).

Originally the series was to be called 'Real Life X Files' but the TV show were not happy about use of the copyright term 'X File' by the BBC.

I was approached in summer 1995 and asked if I wanted to make a half-hour documentary on any aspect of UFOs that I chose. Obviously this was a huge opportunity and I said yes. It came at a difficult time (the week I started work my father died of cancer after a long illness). But I created an outline and from my background (I have a diploma in Media Communications) decided to narrow the focus of the feature considerably and not try to achieve too much. Rather I simply set out to establish what the MoD did or did not know about UFOs.

There was no budget so to speak. I got a camera, as much film as I liked, about £500 for expenses and a producer (Amir Jamal) to help me part time. He was a great help later on - acting as my cameraman on many scenes - but a lot of the early work I did all by myself.

I filmed many hours of material that was never used - eg a great deal at the infamous BUFORA conference in Sheffield in August 1995 when the Roswell autopsy footage was debuted. But copyright and legal restrictions scuppered our initial plans to do the documentary about the UFO community's reaction to this footage - maybe one day I will turn the film that I still have into such a new documentary!

Anyhow after spending months gathering much footage and building towards the new plan to explore the MOD association with UFOs, I had to work with Amir to edit and then I had to write out my own script and record the soundtrack.

We had achieved a number of firsts. Nick Pope, for instance, gave his first on camera interview to me (in late 1995 - six months before *'Open Skies, Closed Minds'* appeared) and this had to be filmed in near darkness for various reasons. We made the now famous breakthrough whilst researching the programme of tracking down and filming (at Lakenheath with USAF permission) three of the original crew from the famous 1956 encounter. Ex MOD man Ralph Noyes was willing to be very open on film for me. The MOD even sent for use a statement admitting they did not deny the possible existence of aliens! So it was a case of trying to tie this together into a package.

As you can imagine this was very much a labour of love. I was barely being paid anything to do it. My book writing had to go on hold between August 1995 and April 1996 as I filmed all over the UK, then edited, script wrote and recorded the material pretty much for nothing. Nor have I ever been paid a penny for all the subsequent repeats (as on UK Horizons, and the show has also appeared on the Science Fiction channel).

As a non professional and with virtually no guidance from BBC production crew it was really hit and miss and the amaterurish feel

that was inevitable from the way it was compiled alone and with hand held cameras was part of the BBC plan.

I cannot judge the end product, of course, but I do think that we produced on a total shoestring a half decent programme seriously looking at UFOs and exposing for the first time on TV many things that as of 1996 had never appeared. We were the first to shoot file hunting in the PRO. We were the first to get Nick Pope and Ralph Noyes on camera offering the MoD position. We were the first to reveal the eyewitnesses behind the Lakenheath case. We were the first to get MIB witness Jim Templeton on screen telling his story of MOD involvement in his case. These were a lot of firsts for a 27 minute programme and so I was really surprised that some UFOlogists later said the programme offers nothing new.

Whilst, of course, it was never written FOR UFOlogists (this venture was putting the serious side of UFology out to the general public for the first time) I still think that the above list shows this comment to be a bit unfair. Almost nothing on screen had appeared in a UFO documentary before.

True - the two main cases featured were old (1956 & 1964) - but that was a necessary consequence of the programme seeking out MoD data about them. The 30 year rule retaining documents from release meant that nothing earlier than 1965 was then on the public record and so for us to go to the PRO and see what they had uncovered about real cases we had to go back three decades like this. I would have thought UFOlogists would understand that.

Anyhow, after I had scripted and recorded the sound track the big boss at the BBC discovered that the first in this series (it had now been decided that my show was the strongest and would launch the six week run in April 1996) was about the MoD and UFOs. He panicked and insisted on a private screening and on talking it through with myself and the Community Programming Unit of the BBC who were behind the show (these are the people who make Video Diaries - although this was not commissioned as a video diary but a new series).

The upshot was that the BBC were very happy with what I had done. They considered it restrained and balanced and that was all that had worried the big boss. I guess they had images of a film about aliens in freezers and the MoD lying about crashed spaceships and I was told that they were pleasantly surprised and relieved not to find that. I think in light of what happened this unexpected and very late intervention (only a week or so before transmission) was the result of someone, somewhere trying to get the BBC to drop the programme before it aired. Judge for yourself against what happened next.

Anyhow, the series was announced and in the few days leading up to transmission there was an almighty fuss. It astounds me to what extent this happened. From Polly Toynbee in *Radio Times* through to commentary in all the highbrow newspapers there was an outcry. The BBC were selling out. They were screening sensationalist tosh. My programme was the biggest load of rubbish ever foisted onto the UK public. It was a disgrace. I was accused of dishonesty, deceit you name it. And so on.

Both myself and the BBC were stunned because we knew our programme was modest and restrained. One show in the series features a man claiming to be a 2000 year old doctor saving lives. Another saw Uri Geller try to bend the ball and allow Reading FC to beat Manchester United (they were hammered!) Ours was a pretty modest and unsensationalist look at UFOs compared with some of the documentaries on the subject on TV. No crashed spaceships. No alien abductions.

In those few days surrounding transmission horrific things happened. My mother had been rushed to hospital with kidney failure and I was commuting to Blackpool every day as there was nobody else to be there now my father had died. The papers were filled with stories attacking me. The weekend after the show a nasty UFologist (ask Andy who!) sold a story about my past to the tabloids causing huge embarrassment to my mother in the hospital ward where she lay seriously ill. And someone tried to stop the programme going out by the day before by calling the BBC bosses to tell them I was under investigation by the authorities for fiddling my national insurance contributions - an absurd lie, of course, and again a despicable and baffling act of desperation by someone for some reason I can only imagine.

The Channel 4 TV series *'Right to Reply'* even featured an attack on my show after transmission put out by Dr Richard Wiseman the debunker who is billed as an expert on the paranormal on many shows today. I gave them permission to use my footage (it is my

copyright and I have retained all the original film - including the untransmitted hours) but they categorically refused to let me appear on this laughably titled show to debate with him.

Oddly nearly all the critics harped on about aliens - even though I deliberately ensured we never discuss this in the programme and clearly argue only about solved and unsolved cases without implying any ET origin.

The Guardian featured a big article by a chap called Simon Hoggart who has written a popular anti paranormal book that is very outspoken. It went on about aliens from the planet Xaxon and bore no resemblance at all to the programme he was supposed to be discussing. All it did was sound off about Hogarth's pet hates in the guise of a review of my documentary.

Thats why I wrote a letter in response - in the wake of his article, all the other hostile publicity (which wrecked any chance of the BBC making a second series of the show) and the terrible attempts by someone, somewhere (I wish I knew who and why) to blacken my name through lies and tabloid exposes.

Mind you we got the last laugh. The programme was a huge success. Over 4 million people watched my episode. This was twice the figures for any of the rest of the series and by some way the biggest audience for a programme by this BBC unit with such a tiny budget. It was number 3 I think in the BBC 2 chart that week and beat new run episodes of award winning dramas such as *Star Trek* and *Murder One* - each of which cost millions. I think this shows that a restrained sensible approach to UFOs that treats the audience with the intelligence that it deserves can pay off.

Indeed it is a pity that the appalling actions of the media in their vicious campaign ensured that the media would never take this message on board. Any other programme that got such a record audience on BBC 2 for such a tiny investment would have been followed up by a sequel. This never will occur because of that hostile response out of all proportion. But one day I intend to turn the footage into a proper home release feature length programme on UFOs. Anyone out there with the vision to help me?

Meantime, I hope that one way or another you watch the show and here's the reply that the Guardian took no notice of at all.

Strange Responses

"What a sad reflection on our society is to be found in Simon Hoggart's review of the BBC TV series 'Secrets of the Paranormal' (see Strange Voices, The Guardian, April 10 1996).

"Evidently a man to whom an open mind is a sin, his diatribe says rather more about his prejudices than it does about the documentary series or the subject matter that he sets out to mug so ineffectively.

"I can but speak on behalf of my own programme on UFOs (Britain's Secret Files) which opened the series.But I must defend against his claim that it was the 'screwiest' of all and was 'careless' and 'dishonest' - scurrilous charges for which he mounts no telling evidence.

"What does he say? - that 'all' my programme proves is that there are around 30 unexplained UFO sightings per year on government files, that the MoD do not know what they are but want to find out and so cover-up this ignorance with excessive secrecy. Thank you,Mr Hoggart,because that is precisely what my documentary set out to establish - nothing more,nothing less.

"Beyond this, of course, we are all entitled to our opinions about the paranormal and it is more than evident from Mr Hoggart exactly what his views seem to be. However, that is no excuse for letting these unfettered opinions loose on a supposed objective review of a TV programme, especially when he launches off on a tangent that is so utterly at odds with what that programme actually says.

"UFOlogy does need critical thought, but it is so disappointing that critics such as your reviewer can only attack the UFOlogy they would like to exist and when faced with something rather more sober must distort the facts in order to vent their bag of standard answers. An ability only to deal with an issue on your own terms suggests intellectual inadequacy in this particular subject.

"Hoggart clearly implies to your readers that I believe in aliens (from his mythical planet Xaxon or indeed from anywhere else) and that my programme sets out to demonstrate this in some way. This is patently untrue. Nowhere in my commentary do I even suggest that UFOs are alien - a deliberate policy on my part because I am not persuaded of this. I would ask Hoggart to justify this presumption which

his text forces upon the reader - justify it directly from things that I say in the documentary. I suspect that he will not be able to do so, which begs the question as to why so much of his review spent time talking about aliens and falsely implying to his readers that my programme does the same.

"I am tempted to wonder whether he falls victim - as do so many UFO critics - to the automatic assumption that UFOs and alien spaceships are synonymous. They then argue onward as if that point is given. Well it is not given. Nowhere do I assume that UFOs are spaceships and it is completely unreasonable to review the programme on the basis that I do. Is it paucity of argument that means he can only criticise UFOs if this alien presumption is made and not on the basis of the more sober reality that appears? Indeed, he exhibits the curious trait of further attacking me because in my final summation I say that I do not know what UFOs are - but then proceeds to write the rest of his article babbling on as if - whatever I say - I simply must do - and have to believe them to be alien !

"Unfortunately, Mr.Hoggart, TV reviewers are meant to review the TV programme that is made - not the one you appear to have wanted me to have made.

"As to his semantic juggling over what a UFO might be. Early on in my programme I state quite clearly that most UFO sightings are explained in conventional terms - the very same terms that your reviewer trots out as if I have never heard of them. When I say in my closing comments that I do not know what UFOs are I am, of course, refering to those cases that defy explanation. These could be many things - such as natural atmospheric phenomena - an area I have discussed at length in my writings. But it was not the purpose of this documentary to present options for these unsolved cases. It was very limited in time and budget and so simply attempted to establish that reports exist and that the MoD know this fact.

"Unhappily, Mr Hoggart seems to know little about the subject that he reviews, citing one dubious case that no investigator I work with has ever termed as serious scientific evidence. Is this really the best he can do? How come he does not discuss either of the cases in my programme involving RAF pilots, radar trackings and baffling photographs that defied analysis by experts?

"UFOs by definition are unidentified - that is all. Of course, one day they may all be explained in some way. The purpose of UFOlogy is to turn UFOs into IFOs (identified flying objects). However, sadly, it is not quite so simple as Mr Hoggart assumes - that all unsolved UFOs are solved UFOs (like weather balloons) for which we just do not have enough data. That fact was firmly established by various scientific studies - eg French scientific team GEPAN at the space centre in Toulouse, the Dr J Allen Hynek Center statistical survey in Chicago and the impressive Battelle Memorial Institute study by a team of scientists working for the US government. I would not expect your reviewer to be aware of this evidence because none of it talks about his dearly beloved spaceships from the planet Xaxon.

But then, nor do I."

Needless to say, the letter was never printed, or even acknowledged...

Jenny Randles

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 8th August 2000

7:00pm-10:00pm

THE THREE CRANES

Queen Street

Sheffield City Centre

FROM AROUND THE WORLD... AND BEYOND!!

UFOs, conspiracies, paranormal and fortean events compiled by Dave Baker

'NESSIE' VOICES RECORDED (?) MIGHT BE RELATIVE OF WALRUS?

6-15-00

Forget the terror of the deep. Nessie could be from the shallower end of the gene pool. A team of Swedish scientists has revealed that the Loch Ness monster may be a distant relative of the walrus, writes Stephen McGinty. While theories abound that the fabled inhabitant of Scotland's most famous loch may be a trapped dinosaur, a giant sturgeon or even an aquatic ghost, new scientific research has suggested a more mundane solution.

A sonic survey carried out by the Scandinavian Global Underwater Search Team found that a series of unidentifiable sounds fell into a frequency matched only by the elephant seal, the walrus or the killer whale.

The sounds, which were described like a pig grunting or a person snoring, were recorded by highly sensitive hydrophones lowered to a depth of 65ft in two spots where sightings have been recorded.

The Swedish team, which carried out the research in March on the Loch's west side, said the sounds were similar to those found in Swedish and Norwegian lakes also rumoured to be populated by water monsters.

Jan Sundeberg, the expedition leader, said the sounds had been analysed by both marine laboratories and the Swedish defence intelligence agency, known as FOA65.

"Most of the noises we picked up in the loch we can identify as eels, pike or trout, but this noise was a sort of grunting, very like sounds we recorded in Lake Seljordsvatnet [in Norway], although shorter and sharper."

The analysis revealed that the noises were in a frequency range 747-751Hz and only the elephant seal, walrus or killer whale make sounds that fall into that category.

"Let's say these sounds were from Nessie - she could be a relative, a sub-species," said Sundeberg.

The expedition, called Nessie 2000, was organised by the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club, based in Inverness.

Gary Campbell, an accountant who launched the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club, believes the research may prove correct.

"I think Nessie is unlikely to be a dinosaur but I do think something got into Loch Ness 10,000 years ago and has evolved."

Sundeberg's expedition has also included a trip to Ireland, where the scientists surveyed Sraheens Loch, also rumoured to contain a mythical beast. The team expects to continue studying Loch Ness in October.

LIGHTS GLOW ON MOON

By BBC News Online science editor Dr David Whitehouse (*Tuesday, 13 June, 2000*)

New evidence shows that the Moon is not a totally dead world as was thought by many astronomers. It does still occasionally stir with activity.

Even though they have been reported from time to time for hundreds of years, claims of changes on the lunar surface have always been controversial. Many scientists have dismissed the occasional reported sightings of glows and mists hanging over certain lunar features.

Now a French astronomer has obtained some of the best evidence yet that occasionally something does disturb the lunar surface.

It was seen in 1992 by veteran lunar observer Audouin Dollfus of the

Observatoire de Paris using the one metre (39 inch) Meudon reflecting telescope. He has only just finished analysing the results, and has submitted them for publication.
On 30 December, he noticed a series of glows on the floor of the large crater Langrenus. They were definitely not there the day before. Professor Dollfus observed them for several days before they faded.

Each time he returned to the telescope, he noticed that the shape of the glows had changed.

He believes that the glows are due to escaping gas that lifts dust above the lunar surface into sunlight.

Some lunar observers have expressed surprise that such a mist should have been seen above Langrenus which was not regarded as a prime candidate for lunar changes.

Professor Dolfuss points out that Langrenus, when observed in detail, has an extensive series of fractures on its crater floor and the gas could be escaping from these.

So-called "Transient Lunar Phenonemon" (TLP) have been reported from time to time but definite evidence has been lacking.

Responding to observations from the ground, Neil Armstrong was asked to look for glows on the Moon during the Moon landing in July 1969. He reported seeing a part of the Moon glow, but later could not be sure which region it was.

In 1994, the Clementine lunar orbiting satellite observed the crater Aristarchus before and after a TLP was seen from the Earth.

COUPLE TO SUE OVER 'HAUNTED HOUSE'

A US couple who claim their dream home is haunted are trying to sue the developer's estate for building on an old graveyard.

Tom and Deborah Carven, of Bishopville, Maryland, claim developer Louis Hickman flattened a small graveyard and left buried corpses.

The graveyard is not mentioned on deeds to the property but it was mentioned so often by elderly locals that Deborah Carven decided to start digging herself, reports the Maryland Sun.

She told appeal court judges: "I was in this hole and I found bones and a casket handle."

Mr Hickman died in 1997 but his estate says he's protected by a law that gives builders immunity from a lawsuit brought more than 20 years after development. He began working on the land in 1964.

Talks between the two sides have failed and the Carvens now claim their home is worthless. The couple want $1.5 million (£1 million) in damages.

(6-17-00 SIGHTINGS website)

CROP CIRCLES MYSTIFY RUSSIAN FARMERS

The overnight appearance of crop circles in a field in southern Russia has puzzled farmers, with witnesses saying aliens landed there.

Russian Public TV reported that a farmer from the village of Yuzhnoye, Stavropol Territory called in local officials "to record an act of vandalism" after finding that his field of ripe barley had seemingly been ruined.

Closer examination revealed four distinct circles - one 20 metres in diameter in the centre and three outer ones 5-7m in diameter each.

The barley had been smoothed down "as if by hand" in a clockwise direction.

Representatives of the Stavropol security council arrived on the scene and suppressed all reports of what happened.

They found no traces of radiation or chemicals, and human intervention was ruled out.

Officials found eyewitnesses in a neighbouring village who said they had seen a UFO landing in the field.

Vasily Belchenko, security council deputy secretary, was inclined to believe them.

"There is no doubt that it was not man-made, that somebody was playing a practical joke," he said. "An unknown object definitely landed there.

"It obviously used an unknown landing principle.

"Eyewitnesses say that the landing was very quick and the take-off was immediate," he added.
"It all happened in a few seconds."

The TV suggested that the UFO had come to the field to take a sample of the soil.

A 20-cm-deep cylindrical hole with polished walls was found right in the centre of the large circle.

The farmers are still wondering why aliens needed their earth.

(*BBC News On-line*)

GIANT AIRSHIP COULD END FAMINE

by Richard Allen

(*Editor's note: not strictly UFO related, but considering these damn things have to be tested somewhere, could this be the culprit responsible for 'giant' UFO sightings?)*

The prototype for a gigantic airship the length of four Jumbo jets and capable of carrying 880 cars from London to New York in three days is due to be unveiled tomorrow.

The 100mph craft, SkyCat 1000, designed by British engineers, will use hovercraft technology to enable it to land anywhere, even on water, without the need for a ground crew.

In the days of the Graf Zeppelin more than 200 people were needed on the ground to bring it down. Now Aircraft Technologies Group is launching SkyCat's 50ft baby, SkyKitten, at Cardington in Bedfordshire, the home of the ill-fated R101 airship which crashed in France in 1928 with the loss of 40 lives.

But the design brains behind ATG, Roger Munk, is keen to point out that hydrogen, the highly flammable gas used in the R101 and the Hindenberg, which crashed in 1937, is a thing of the past. Modern airships use helium, an inert gas that is actually used to put fires out.

Mr Munk said: "SkyCat 1000 is basically a heavy lift platform that can be used for a whole stack of purposes. It is a transport system that's between slow-but-cheap shipping and fast-but-expensive jet aircraft.

"The fact it can land on any terrain of water or marsh makes it particularly flexible. In aid situations, with a 1,000-tonne payload, you could literally stop a famine in one go. That's a pretty powerful change in transport logistics. It has the same operating costs in tonne- miles as a lorry but when you take into account the logistic costs it's a lot cheaper.

"It would also make an enormous difference in mounting the expeditionary warfare which is so difficult these days. Some lunatic does something in some far- flung part of the globe and, as was demonstrated in Kosovo, the West cannot get in a sufficiently large ground force quickly enough to stop the threat.

"What troublemakers know is that the West has extremely slow response times. This kind of technology enables you to fly in a balanced force that can stop an outbreak in its tracks."

By the middle of next year ATG expects to have a 269ft, 15-tonne pay-load machine flying, which could be used for taking 100 people on low-level sightseeing trips or for carrying a huge TV advertising screen.

The year after that will see the production of a 200-tonne payload aircraft, carrying twice the load of a Jumbo jet,and two years after that the SkyCat 1000.

The C5, the largest military transport plane currently used by the US military, can carry one tank. The SkyCat 1000 would be able to carry 16.

It would be capable of crossing the Atlantic twice without refuelling at a speed four times faster than the world's biggest cruise ship. It is so vast it could not fit into Wembley Stadium. In fact, by volume, it could contain Wembley Stadium.

Although ATG is initially focusing on the potential for cargo transportation, the company says that once the technology is up and running, it could be used for a whole range of purposes.

Other possible military uses include naval mine sweeping or as an airborne radar platform. SkyCat 1000 is particularly suitable for the latter role as it could remain "on station" for days rather than hours as is the case with aircraft.

Its size means that, unlike existing airborne radar platforms, it can accommodate the large antennae needed to detect small, "stealthy" targets such as cruise missiles.
Around 450 passengers could travel in the SkyCat 1000 in comfort or 100 passengers in the kind of spacious elegance offered by an ocean liner. There could be silver- service meals, lounges, possibly a piano bar and state rooms for a comfortable night's sleep.

When conditions are right, the captain could descend to 600ft and cut the engines so that travellers could stroll on an outer promenade deck in complete silence.

(*Evening Standard*)

IS BIGFOOT LURKING ON THE HOH RESERVATION?

Thursday, June 29, 2000

By Nick Haney

For the past week the normal tranquillity of the West End community has been disturbed. Residents are locking once-open doors, shutting blinds and closing windows.

Something has been lurking in the woods behind Gene Sampson's and Steven Penn's homes on the Hoh Indian Reservation. Some Hoh natives believe this ``invader" is the elusive Sasquatch. Others remain skeptical and prefer not to believe.

Westerners have recorded encounters with Bigfoot for only a couple of hundred years, but American Indian folklore about the hairy being is much older, having been passed down orally for many generations, Sampson said.

Most reports regarding the creature include the same description: a tall human-like being, averaging 7 -- feet in height, weighing from 500 to 800 pounds and covered in hair.

For the past five days, Sampson has found two sets of footprints, which he measured at 14 inches and 17-- inches in length, 7 and 8 inches in width -- and a big toe measuring 2-- inches wide for the smaller creature and 3-- inches for the larger.

Along with footprints, he also found trampled trails in a heavily wooded area, and branches and bark broken off trees about 20 feet high.

'THEY WON'T BE SAID, WILL THEY' DEPT.

NASA scientists are to probe a video of what a Doncaster man suspected to be a UFO. (*See last issue's article by Dr.Dave Clarke)*
Businessman Gary Chapman captured a mysterious fireball in the sky on his camcorder during a visit to Gran Canaria in 1997.

But now South Yorkshire researchers [?] believe they have pinpointed the mystery light as the burning wreckage of a Russian space rocket disintegrating over the Atlantic.

Gary, from Thorne, reported seeing the fireball move slowly across the night sky at 1.30 am local time as he relaxed with his partner in a chalet overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.

It moved smoothly through the sky and at one stage appeared to explode. Then it reappeared again, appearing to have changed shape. But after an investigation involving consultation with the British Astronomical Association and photographic analysts, UFO Investigators Network researchers identified the UFO as a Russian Soyuz rocket booster.

NASA data confirmed the rocket would have been moving over Gran Canaria at the time of the sighting in November 1997.

A spokesman for UFOIN said: "The analysis leaves little room for doubt that the object captured on film by the Yorkshire witness was the final minutes of the Russian rocket as it disintegrated over the Atlantic Ocean."

But despite UFOIN's findings, 41-year-old property developer Gary still believes he saw a flying saucer. He said: "I'm not convinced. I've

never seen anything like it before. I wasn't scared when I saw it, just excited.

"There were a lot of other people who saw it but no one else had a camera. My first thought was it was a UFO. It wasn't going tremendously fast and appeared to be gliding, then it accelerated.

"I will always think it was a UFO."

Now a copy of the footage has been forwarded to NASA Space Debris Programme expert Dr Nicholas Johnson for additional analysis.

(*Doncaster Star, June 21, 2000*)

FARLOW CASE RE-INVESTIGATED

The KARL FARLOW Case, November 5th, 1967

By Paul Fuller (UFOIN)

UFOIN (UFO Investigation Network) has been making significant progress in our re-investigation of this famous case. The Farlow car stop event has attracted considerable interest in the UFO literature as it allegedly involved a UFO which (a) caused vehicle interference to two verhicles, (b) involved multiple witnesses, (c) caused damage to the road surface and (d) involved serious post encounter interest by the authorities.

Karl Farlow was a 25 year old truck driver who was on a regular trip from his home in the English Midlands to Christchurch on the south coast. Farlow claimed that as he approached Ibsley Bridge, a few miles south of Fordingbridge, large egg-shaped object descended from the sky and landed on the road in front of him, causing his truck lights and dashboard lights to go out and his vehicle to stop. Intriguingly the diesel engine continued running.

The UFO remained on the road for some time before taking off and flying away over the New Forest.

Farlow claims that as the UFO left he noticed a second vehicle, a cream coloured Jaguar car, stationary on the opposite side of the carriageway. Farlow claims that the vehicle contained a vet and a young woman and that their vehicle had also been immobilised by the UFO.

Unfortunately (according to the earliest version of this story) the driver had been drinking and drove away before Farlow could take his name or address.

Farlow contacted the local police and officer Roy Nineham was one of the first to arrive on the scene. According to quotes in both local and national newspapers the following day Nineham described Farlow as a very "frightened" young man who had seen a UFO that was a "beautiful green".

In 1980 BUFORA's Director of Research Tony Pace published a different version of this case in BUFORA's Vehicle Interference Report (VIR) following his interview with Farlow. This claimed that the event took place at Avon Causeway, which is three miles north of Christchurch, rather than at Ibsley Bridge, 10 miles to the north. Pace's report revealed that not only had the road surface been damaged by the UFO but that Farlow and the occupants of the other car were taken to Christchurch Police Station and questioned by the police until 4.30 in the morning. The VIR report also claims that the woman was in a state of shock and required overnight hospitalisation.

UFOIN has tracked down three of the surviving police officers involved in the event. We have obtained contemporary large-scale Ordnance Survey maps of the location and we have taken photographs of the location as it is today.

Our most important discovery has been that the event definitely took place at Ibsley rather than at Avon Causeway. We have also obtained the official Ministry of Defence record of this event, which (given the date) is not surprisingly attributed to a "firework".

We are trying to track down Karl Farlow, who has recently visited the Greek Island of Kos, but who left this island in late 1999.

We would be very pleased to hear from any researchers who can assist us in tracking down Farlow as we have important new lines of enquiry which only Farlow can assist with.

We would also like to hear from any one who attended the public lecture given by Farlow to BUFORA in March 1968 as this event possibly holds clues as to what really happened that damp November night in 1967.

Paul Fuller

The UFOIN website can be found at:

(GOODNESS GRACIOUS!)-GREAT BALLS OF FIRE!

By Andy Roberts

We may call them UFOs or Flying Saucers now, but to the bomber crews of W.W.II unidentified aerial phenomena were referred to simply as 'foo fighters'. No-one is certain when and where the name originated, though it may stem from the French word *feu*, meaning fire, or possibly from a catch-phase used in the popular U.S.cartoon Smokey Stover. However, to those who experienced these odd, glowing balls of light the name was immaterial. What mattered was being able to survive to tell the tale.

This is the story of one such encounter. On the evening of 26th April 1944 Arthur Horton taxied his Lancaster bomber onto the runway at RAF Mildenhall in preparation for a bombing raid to Essen in Germany. It was, he thought, just another routine if terrifying, mission.

Horton had not heard about the foo-fighters and was only concerned with the task in hand – find the target, drop the bombs and hopefully return home as quickly and safely as possible. He had no idea what was to happen in the next few hours, and how an unexplained aerial phenomenon would almost cost him and his crew their lives.

The raid went as exactly as planned despite the usual fatal distractions of Luftwaffe night-fighters and the flak which sought them out in the searchlight beams.

Bombs dropped the Lancaster turned for home and the crew allowed themselves to relax slightly. But shortly after leaving the target Hortons intercom crackled into life with a panicky warning from his rear-gunner.

Unidentified lights had appeared,as if from nowhere, and were following the plane. Horton asked the gunner if he was certain. Yes, he replied, four orange balls of light were tailing them, two on each side of the aircraft, accelerating in short spurts of energy.

According to the frightened gunner they were about the size of large footballs and had a fiery glow to them.

Other crew members could see them now, so Horton knew they must be real and not just hallucinations brought on by combat fatigue. One gunner thought he could see small, stubby wings and possibly an exhaust glow from the rear of the objects. Now Horton was getting worried. He had never experienced anything like this before and whilst the unidentified objects were not showing any signs of aggression he couldn't take the risk. Forty years after the event the frightened pilot recalled what he did next:

"I of course immediately dropped the aircraft out of the sky, my gunners didn't know what they were. Should they fire? By this time I was standing the aircraft on its tail and beginning a series of corkscrews and turns with the things following everything I did - but making no move to attack us. By this time we had the throttles through the gate, the gunners still asking what they should do.

"Apart from flying the thing I had to try and answer them. But were they some form of flying contraption that would explode at some specific distance from us, or on contact? Did they want us to fire at them to cause an explosion? Out of the kaleidoscope of thought the only answer was If they are leaving us alone, leave them alone...."

Horton continued evasive action for ten minutes, during which time all the crew except

himself and the bomb aimer saw the phenomena. Whatever the objects were they stayed close to the Lancaster, duplicating its every move, until they reached the Dutch coast when, in the words of Bernard Dye the mid-upper gunner they seemed to burn themselves out.

Exhausted, but relieved, the Horton flew the Lancaster back to England. His dramatic evasive manoeuvres had caused a serious mechanical fault which resulted in them having to land at a different airfield. Horton and his crew were baffled by their mystery visitors, and could only presume they had been chased by a secret weapon, perhaps a radio-controlled anti-aircraft rocket or shell.

Upon reporting their experience to the Intelligence Officers at de-briefing they were met not with interest but with ridicule and no explanation as to what they had experienced.
But Horton stuck to his account and wouldn't be persuaded his crew had imagined the glowing orange balls. In his log book for the flight Horton recorded they had been 'Chased by rockets'.

So what are we to make of this pre-1947 UFO sightings? In a bomber the lives of several people depended on the rapid and accurate identification of what was in their airspace.

In this case the crew were all using oxygen so there seems to be no possibility of hallucination. Even if there were, could six people really share the same hallucination for ten minutes?

Perhaps these rockets some kind of secret German weapon as Horton and his crew believed? It seems unlikely. Although rumour abounded throughout the war about secret Nazi aerial technology no hard evidence has even been found to substantiate them. But these objects were real enough to the crew of Lancaster LM 477, real enough for the pilot to almost destroy the plane in an effort to evade them and real enough to be recorded in the official log despite the protestations of the Intelligence Officers.

Although Horton and his crew had never heard of anything similar before or since, the phenomena they witnessed is entirely consistent with other so-called foo-fighter experiences. Perhaps if Hortons' rear-gunner had opened fire on the UFOs we may be a lot wiser about the nature of the foo-fighter phenomenon.

But then again perhaps not. It was a risk Flt Lt Horton was not prepared to take.....

Andy Roberts

SURFACE WATER FOUND ON MARS

Not only is there water on Mars, but it springs from rock layers surprisingly close to the surface, NASA scientists say. Just pound a pipe into one of these layers and stand back,' says Kenneth Edgett of Malin Space Science Systems in San Diego (California), one of the authors of a Mars study unveiled by NASA Thursday, June 22, 2000.

Water channel images captured by the space agency's Mars Global Surveyor were disclosed a week early in response to intense public interest and sometimes inaccurate speculation.

The discovery shocked scientists who believed that liquid water had disappeared from Mars at least three billion years ago and that the planet's thin, frigid atmosphere would quickly absorb any liquid.

Photos of various Martian 'gullies' and other small features were shown at the NASA briefing. Since July (1999), researchers have discovered about 200 such channels, mostly in moderate latitudes of the southern hemisphere, carved in the walls of craters, valleys and pits.

These dry channels differ from terrain shaped by landslides or lava. They possess curvy shapes and deep, narrow channels that resemble streams on Earth. Apparently water occasionally bursts from rock strata about 500 feet below ground. The strata exposed on slope walls were thought to be two to three miles deeper. Still, the discovery of water channels on Mars that appear to have been carved out in recent times present some puzzling problems for scientists.

"I was dragged kicking and screaming into seeing these features,' says Kenneth Edgett of Malin Space Sciences Systems in San Diego." Edgett did the first interpretation of the images of about 200 'gullies,' culled from 65,000 photographs taken by the orbiting Mars Global Surveyor in the last year.

Scientists had believed that water could stay liquid only in warmer Martian rock, miles below the surface and safe from the planet's thin, frigid air.

"I'm having trouble reconciling these compelling images with what we know about conditions on Mars," says geologist Michael Carr of the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park, California.
(UFO Updates, Joe Trainor)

(As this story is still breaking, PRB will keep you up to date with future developments- DB)

UFOs- THE KEY TURNING POINT

By W. H. Booker (YUFOS)

Author's history:I am a very keen ufologist, and have been for around 50 years, although I am not an authorised UFO investigator, but more of a UFO researcher. At the age of 15 I joined the Air Training Corps (1945-48) and trained for three years in several subjects; 1)aircraft recognition (the ability to recognise different aircraft at all angles, both ours and enemy craft), 2) map reading, including compass reading and direction finding 3) morse code (receiving and sending), 4) signal codes, 5) radio communications, weather recording, 6) armed/unarmed combat, 7) rifle shooting, short/long range, 8) continuity drill, 9) solo gliding ('A' cert held), and rising to rank of flight sergeant before national service in the RAF 1948-50. While in the RAF I trained as a wireless mechanic operating on (SBA) standard beam approach equipment, plus aircraft and meteorological receivers and transmitters. During my service I travelled as far afield as Singapore, Hong Kong and China.

Over the years I have been involved in many hobbies- most recently I have obtained a GCE in astronomy at evening school, plus a City & Guilds certificate in radio communications and am now a licenced 'radio amateur' operating on air with my own transmitter. My other hobbies include DIY motor mechanics, electrician, photography, chemistry, geology, physics, all areas of science and electronics. Although I have no qualifications in these subjects I feel reasonably qualified to asses most UFO situations.

Now at the age of 70 I feel it essential to tell my story, to pass on all my knowledge, ideas and theories gained over the past 50 years. To get it all down in black and white, and to try to complete this vast jigsaw for all to benefit in future years.

It is over 50 years, (actually 1946/47) since my first sighting of an unidentified flying object. At that time I had no idea what it was that I had seen. In fact at that time no-one had ever heard of UFOs, 'Flying Saucers' or anything like them.

A great many explanations for UFOs have been put forward by scientists, sceptics, and professionals from all walks of life, even astronomers. These include the planet Venus, St.Elmo's fire, meteorlogical balloons, refractions, reflections, heat hazes and hysteria. Any one of these can explain some sightings, but not all.

95% of reported sightings can usually be attributed to the above group, plus a few hoaxes. But it is the remaining 5% of completely unexplainable sightings that we are interested in.

Since my schooldays in the 1940s I have always been interested in astronomy. My first impression of what I saw over 50 years ago was that it could be a planet, or a small meteor coming down to earth. It first appeared as a small red/orange ball in an almost clear sky, approaching from the west. It increased in size every second, obviously coming in my direction, but getting lower at the same time. Within a few seconds it had reached the same size as the setting sun. But then it appeared to have stopped. It remained suspended, as though it had stopped to observe something. At this stage I began to think of it as more mechanical than planetary! (Further details of this sighting shall be mentioned later, along with other sightings.)

I remained puzzled for about three years by this sighting until a friend of mine at work passed a book on to me, thinking I would be interested. In that book were a great number of sightings giving the exact description of that first unidentified object I had seen three years earlier- in other words, a UFO!

Since that time I have studied the whole wide area of the UFO phenomenon.

During the long period I have read many books on UFOs, plus most related phenomena in and around this fascinating topic. I have also found over a period of time that a large percentage of authors have repeatedly quoted the same reports over and over again; the same close encounters, abductions, crashed vehicles, strange moving lights, all repeating the same dates, times and locations.
I would like to move away from all of these dates, times and locations that we have read so many times before. To study very carefully the actual reports, to go through in very great detail what was actually seen, heard and detected, including everything that happened in the area at the time. In other words, I want to tackle the whole subject from a completely different angle. What we might call an unconventional or a wide off-beat scientific approach.

Many strange and exotic explanations have been given over the years for the UFO phenomenon. From early history they were "the fiery chariots", "celestial airships", on to modern descriptions of "flying saucers", glowing balls of fire, luminous discs, cigar-shaped craft, foo-fighters, "flying triangles", plus many more. They are all classed as being very eerie and unusual phenomenon.

Inevitably many of these strange stories we read manage to pique the inquisitive mind, enough to heighten the desire to solve the mystery, or at the very least to come up with a few more relevant facts.

We are only just scratching the surface of the many strange things happening in our quickly changing universe. The stories and tales of UFO phenomena over the years seems to have remained in a sort of suspended animation or limbo, waiting for someone to make an in-depth investigation.

Many researchers in time past, scientists included have tried to solve some of these mysteries, apparently only to come to a dead end. Nowadays people are herded towards greater and greater specialisation, into tighter and tighter boxes, or spheres of the mind. To be an expert in such a world "...is to know a lot about a little" and "..a little about everything else" which is an inefficient procedure in this modern society. If we don't tackle this subject systematicaly we may find our minds whirling with various speculations about unfathomable ideas- beyond our comprehension and well out of our depth. Therefore we must try and build a reasonable picture, from the thousands of small and insignificant pieces of a vast jigsaw. In order to solve this conundrum we have ask a lot of searching questions in order to get some positive answers.

To start with I suggest we try using all of our senses. Not just basic sight and hearing, but touch, smell, taste and anything else our mental capacity will allow us to use. We shouldn't even rule out telepathy or ESP...very often we take it for granted that all of our senses give us a complete picture of the environment around us. Nothing could be further from the truth! We are stone deaf and colour-blind to all impressions beyond the range of our senses. As we all know, many animals, from dogs, cats, bats, birds, bees, insects, even fish, can detect sounds and light waves far beyond our own range.

At the same time, in view of the era in which we live, there is an urgent call to explore the far reaches of the universe, the infinite structure on matter and the limitless borders of time. If we can study the exploration of the planets and their satellites in our solar system, our knowledge will expand into new areas previously unheard of.

Many familiar every-day things are also taken for granted, such as night/day, light, colours, sounds, smells, hot/cold through our senses. Other familiar things like time, hours, days, weeks, and years, all have conventional frames we have been given since time immemorial, to live and work with and give us some organisation in our lives. For a anyone to question any of these frames or facts, we would class them as completely eccentric. It would disturb the whole neatness of our lives, and most of us don't take kindly to having our lives tampered with.

I am no professor of physics, or highly-qualified scientist, I do have a logical, scientific and enquiring mind. Although I am about to cover a very wide area of the UFO

phenomenon, my main interest in in their ability to travel far, and the means of power used.

I would like us to tackle several different subjects, so I suggest we split these into 5 groups- speed, sight, sound, time and gravity.

So firstly, for a moment I would like you to use your imagination, because I want to take you on a little journey and travel into our first uncharted area- into space- as an astronaut. Very few people realise that we are all astronauts! (He's crazy, I hear some say). Okay, maybe I am, but first hear me out, then call me crazy. Remember they said the same thing about Leonardo deVinci and even Einstein in his early years...

SPEED

We all know that the Earth revolves on it's own axis, once in every 24 hours. The speed at the equator is 1040 mph. At our own location, some 53/54 degrees north,we move around a little slower, approximately 600/700 mph. The Earth also moves around the sun in 365 days – one year- at a speed of 66,600mph. Then we still go on. Our solar system is moving through the galaxy on the edge of the milky way- at a speed of 481,000mph. So you and I, plus millions of other astronauts are travelling through space at 548,640 mph! Not inside some well constructed and protected vehicle, but on the surface of our own spacecraft-Earth, and we don't even feel any movement at all.

So thinking about this amazing craft of ours, all we have to do then is duplicate it on a smaller scale, produce a form of power to move us away from the Earth's gravitational pull, and we could travel through space in comfort! Sounds easy enough!

But gravity is another part of our story, which we shall return to later.

If we go back in time, history tells us that speed was limited to the pace of running horses, or the swift speed of the arrow from the bow. Not until we approached the 20th Century did speed start to move in any appreciable steps. During the last few decades it has moved out of all proportion, from a few hundred miles per hour to several thousands of miles per hour in the form of space flight.

We normally visualise speed in miles per hour, but when calculating speed in space, the vast distances are measured in the form of 'light years'. This means the speed light travels in one year. Light travels at 186,000 miles per second.

Now there are thousands of reports of UFOs travelling tremendous speeds, some estimated to be in the region of 1000 to 10,000 miles per hour. You would probably think this impossible. No normal human or known creature could possibly withstand these sort of speeds of G-forces, especially sometimes from a virtual standstill.

Now we know that the Earth is moving very fast through space, but do we feel any movement at all? None whatsoever,even with all our senses on alert. So it makes me wonder if we are the ones moving very fast through space and the UFOs are almost stationary!

We must come face to face with speed both on Earth and in space, plus what energy is required to produce speed through acceleration. The amount of power used to put a manned space probe into orbit is colossal. The monsters standing at Cape Kennedy contain as much energy as the first atomic bombs in their fuel tanks, and not very reliably controlled at that. We desperately need a safer way of space travel. I feel that it is not beyond the present horizon of today's science.

One of the fastest speeds measured along with light is radio waves; both travel at 186,000 miles per second. The light from the sun takes 8 minutes to reach us on Earth. The reflected light from Pluto, our most distant planet in the solar system, takes 5 hours to reach us. The light from the nearest star Proxima Centauri takes over 4.5 years to reach us. The light from the Andromeda galaxy takes over 2 million years to reach us...and that galaxy can be seen with the naked eye!

This is only a very brief look at astronomy and speed/time, but it will give you some idea of the vast distances in space. Some scientists many years ago compared the Earth as "one single grain of sand" in the whole of the Sahara desert.

You are probably wondering what all this has to do with UFOs – well, it is really to give you an idea of the vast distances in time and space that these craft must travel, and the speeds they must reach. If only we knew their secret formula! The whole of Earth's transport

system could be revolutionised, a complete, gigantic metamorphosis would be reached with no more oil, petrol, electric motors, rocket propulsion, to some alternative, natural energy which at the same time could be far more economical.

It is hoped that from the many reports and all the previous scientific studies, it will stimulate further research from enthusiastic ufologists, scientists and anyone else with a keen interest in this phenomenon. Any forthcoming ideas or knowledge should be made available for study.

(continued next issue…)